NAQCC News

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1. AUGUST SPRINT: Our 82nd regular 2-hour sprint is this coming Tuesday evening, August 9 at 8:30P EDT, 7:30P CDT, 6:30P MDT, 5:30P PDT which in all cases convert to Wednesday from 0030Z to 0230Z. The last 16 sprints have had over 100 logs submitted, and we hope to extend that to 17 this month. It was one year ago in the August 2010 sprint we set our all-time record of 135 logs. Can we break that this month? If conditions permit, I think we can with your help.

If you've never tried contesting, or are relatively new at it, our sprints are one of the best training grounds around. Because of the friendliness of our members and the big bonus for straight key operation, our sprints are NOT the frantic high-speed kind you hear from other clubs. Newcomers will feel comfortable with the lower speeds and slower pace of our sprints. If you do hear someone too fast for you, in most all cases they will slow down (QRS) if you ask. So come on and give it a try if you've never done any contesting or sprinting before. You might find you like it and become regular participants as many of our members have done before you.

To reward participation in our sprints, there are prizes in addition to our handsome certificates. With our very high participation rate, we have increased our certificates several times during our sprint history. We started with just 3 certificates to the top 3 scorers overall, and have progressed to the point where we now have a certificate for the top scorer in each USA call area, Canada, and DX. Those are all for the Simple Wire Antenna category, and there is an additional one to the overall top score among the few who use Gain antennas. Oh, and one for the top score overall from a first-time participant. Whew! That keeps our certificate manager Rick AA4W busy.

I said prizes also. Yes, we award a prize to the winner of a drawing among all who participate

in our sprints. Currently we have a prize of WB8LZG's paddle handles and knobs thanks to another generous donation of the handsome hand-crafted items by Gregg. A person can only win once so everyone has a chance to get one of these beautiful prizes. Take a look at the Prizes page in the main section of the web site to see what they look like if you don't already know.

Oh and one more thing. Another prize of an ARRL wire antenna book goes to the one who has the most GOLDEN LOGS in a year. As with our other prizes, only one to a customer.

With the popularity of our sprints it is becoming necessary to spread out our activity a bit more than the frequencies listed in the rules. That's perfectly OK, but don't stray overly far or you may not be found. Also avoid other scheduled activities when you do so - other contests/sprints, nets, code practice, etc.

Remember to be sure to read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprint here.

2. JULY CHALLENGE RESULTS: The deadline for July challenge submissions is still a few days away, so we don't have complete results in yet. Once again this month, we find the bar may have been set a bit high in a challenge since we disallowed contest/sprint QSO's this year. So far of 7 reports, only 3 folks (K3WWP W9UX K1IEE) made all the words. One (N8XMS) came close, missing by one letter. For any remaining alphabet challenges, we'll have to think about lowering the number of words/letters, and will definitely do so for next year's alpahbet challenges.

Full Challenge info and results can always be found here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- Not a lot of news this issue because of the quick turn-around between issues due to the quirks of the calendar and the scheduling of our sprints. This happens a couple of times a year when our 2nd Tuesday sprint comes early in a month. So we'll just re-hash a couple of continuing items.

- Even with making applying for our Friendship Club award as easy as pie by using GenLog as described in the FC tutorial, we're still not getting hardly any new applications. Maybe that's because our members just aren't friendly. Just kidding - our members are the greatest and friendliest of any club. There must be some other reason. How about letting us know what else we can do to encourage you to earn this award. See here for Friendship Club rules and a link to the tutorial.

- The NAQCC portable operations team of Don K3RLL, Mike KC2EGL, and John K3WWP racked up 28 QSO's using the club call of N3AQC back on July 3rd. We're going to try to break that record when we do it again from the Kittanning Community Park on Sunday August 14th from 1900-2200Z. We'll be mostly on 20, 30, and 40 meters around 14060, 10116, and 7040 depending on QRM. We'll send out a last minute reminder on our club email list that Sunday morning. We hope you'll make a note to remind yourself and try your best to work us. We should reach most of the USA with our tri-band operation and maybe even some DX.

- Here's an updated list of those who've signed up to help us out with our October anniversary celebration by using one of our 10 N#A special event calls the week of Monday

October 10 through Sunday October 16. If you don't see your call there, why not? All those who've operated our SE calls through the years have enjoyed it tremendously as well as helping to publicize the club. You don't need to make a firm commitment right now, but let us know if you're interested. You can always kC9cS back out later if you should unfortunately become ill or have other more pressing things come up for that week. As you see from the list, we have no one expressing interest yet from the W6 call area. We want to have all 10 call areas be very active, so if you're in one of those call areas with no one listed or an area with just one person listed, come on and sign up. No matter how many we have from a call area, there is always room for one more, also. Remember time is drawing near with just over 2 months that will go by very quickly before the event.

N1A - N1DN KB1PBA
N2A - WB2VEN NW2K
N3A - K3WWP WY3H KC2EGL N3ES AF3Z WA3HIC
N4A - K2UFT KI4EBD N4EWT
N5A - W5YDM K5JYD
N6A
N7A - WD8KRV
N8A - N8XMS N8IUP
N9A - AB9JT
N0A - KC0PMH N0TU K0HJC KD0V WD0K

I'm sure there are others out there who will sign up. I hope you will do so as soon as possible so we can do some more active recruiting for any call areas that need it.

Perhaps you did offer to help and are not listed. If so, then your offer was derailed somewhere along the email tracks. Please tell us again.

The guidelines are very simple. All you do is operate normally, but use the special event call instead of your own. Period. The operators in a call area co-ordinate their on-air times among themselves.

Contact us via email at **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** to sign up.

Remember conditions should be the best they have been for any of our previous anniversary celebrations with the Sun finally coming alive this year. It should be a real bang-up celebration. Don't you want to be a part of it?

- We have a new poll question up waiting for your votes. See the main page of the web site and cast your vote. You can also see the past poll results via a link on the main page.

- Just a quick reminder we're continuing with the hidden call sign idea originally suggested by Bill KB3XS. Somewhere in this newsletter is a call sign of a member in a place that is definitely out of context and containing a mix of upper and lower case letters. If it is YOUR call sign and YOU find it, email **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** BEFORE the publication date of the next newsletter (Aug 27) and win a gift certificate for 100 NAQCC QSL cards produced by the CheapQSLs.com company run by Hal K6RF (#0171) and donated by the NAQCC thanks to your generous monetary donations to the club.

3a. CHAPTER NEWS:

Here is where our club chapters present news about their chapter activities. We currently have

three chapters - European, Minnesota, and Texas. We're looking forward to expanding that roster. Chapters are more or less independent local gatherings organized by members in a geographical area and subject to a list of guidelines under the auspices of the NAQCC. If you would be interested in starting a chapter in your area, let us know and we'll send a copy of the guidelines.

NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER:

pix_sm_mw3ymy (13K)

Items in this section are from EU Chapter President Matt MW3YMY unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **MATT@MATTIRELAND.CO.UK**
The EU Chapter web site is at http://naqcc-eu.org/

The next European Chapter sprint will be held on Wednesday, 10th August at 1800-2000Z. Please join us to help make the sprint a success. We welcome participation from all members, not just those in Europe: help is very much appreciated from amateurs outside of Europe for DX QSOs in the sprint.

We hope to hear you on the bands for the sprint. Full rules and log submission details can be found on the chapter website.

NAQCC MINNESOTA CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from Chapter President Rich WD0K (L) and/or Keith K0HJC (R) unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to pix_email_wd0k .
The Minnesota Chapter web site is at http://www.naqccmn.com/

NAQCC TEXAS CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from TX Chapter Director Ron K5DUZ unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **WEBMASTER7388@NAQCCTX.COM**
The TX Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcctx.com/

4. NAQCC CW ASSISTANCE PROJECT:

Items in this section are from CW Assistance Project Coordinator Ron K5DUZ (L) unless otherwise credited.
If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:

K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**

Ron has become involved in another work project and will be unavailable to write info for this section for a while. If you would like to write something that you feel will be helpful to our members in learning CW or improving CW skills, please feel free to do so.

Since no one has yet stepped forward, I (K3WWP) will offer a couple topics this issue. Last month we suggested the very best way to call CQ in normal operation and in contests. This issue, the best way to answer a CQ and logging times correctly.

First of all, the best thing to do is to zero beat the station you are calling. For any rank newcomer, zero beating is a term left over from the early days of radio when you actually did tune your VFO until the beat note between it and the station you are planning to call became zero Hz or inaudible. Nowadays it means setting your frequency exactly to that of the station you are calling by whatever means your station setup uses.

Of course if you're using a crystal controlled rig, you can't do that and your procedure will be a bit different as described below.

When you are zero beat, send the call of the station you are calling once since he knows his call, and you only need to send it once so he knows for sure you are calling him. Then DE and your call twice (maybe 3 times in poor conditions) as follows:

X3XXX DE K3WWP K3WWP AR

The AR is sent as one character, not two. It means the end of your call, and hopefully the station heard you and will start a QSO with you. Technically it's not proper to use K, and definitely not KN here since you are not yet in definite communication with the station and not telling him to go ahead.

DO NOT send his call several times, and yours only once. Again he knows his call, and wants to know yours. He may not get it right if you only send it once.

The exception is for crystal control when you KNOW you are not zero beat, then it is best to send his call 2 or 3 times and yours twice as:
X3XXX X3XXX DE K3WWP K3WWP AR

In contesting or sprints, brevity is the number one priority. In that situation, when responding to a CQ, simply send your call once - period. DON'T send his call, DE, AR, K, or anything but your call. See the first two items in a typical contest exchange here:

X3XXX sends: CQ NA X3XXX
K3WWP responds with: K3WWP
(contest exchange now takes place if he heard you)

A second quick topic. Use of the correct time in logging. One of our members (Art K6XT) explained this very well in a recent member news item. I'd like to repeat in summary form here.

In a world-wide hobby like ham radio, it can be very confusing if we use Eastern Standard Time when communicating with someone in say Australia. Offhand I have no idea what time it is in Australia right now in Australian time. I don't even know what time zone(s) Australia uses. The same way with the person in Australia and USA time. If I use EST on my QSL, eQSL, LotW, etc., it is more or less meaningless to the Australian ham until he performs some tricky calculations. You get the picture.

OK so how do we get around this shortcoming? We use what was once called GMT or Greenwich Meridian Time, which is the time at Greenwich observatory in England. Now it is commonly called UTC or Z time (both terms are identical, Z is more commonly used for brevity). It's a 24 hour time with no colons in the time. That is, 10:30 AM is 1030, 2:20 PM is 1420. There are no time zones for UTC - the time is the same everywhere.

When a person in the EST zone says the QSO took place at 0120Z, the ham in Australia also using UTC, has 0120Z in his log as well and there is no confusion. Therefore all hams world-wide need to learn and use UTC or Z time.

There's a conversion factor for each time zone around the world that makes it simple to convert local time to UTC. I'll just list a couple examples here which should make it obvious once you learn your local conversion factor.

Here in the EST zone, simply add 5 hours to local time, that is:
10:30 AM plus 5 hours equals 1530Z after dropping the colon

2:20 PM is a tad trickier. First convert to 24 hour time which becomes 2:20 plus 12 or 14:20 EST, then add the 5 hours conversion factor and you get 1920Z

Trickiest of all is when the date changes with the conversion. Follow along carefully here:

9:30 PM EST converted to 24 hour time becomes 21:30 EST. Then adding 5 hours makes it 2630Z. Huh? There are only 24 hours in a day. Well then we subtract 24 hours to make it 0230Z, BUT it is now the next day. I'll repeat - it's now the next day. This leads to a lot of confusion to those new to UTC or Z time, so here's a more specific example:

9:45 PM EST on Tuesday, December 9, 2011 after conversion as shown above becomes 0245Z on Wednesday, December 10, 2011.

Many countries use Daylight Savings Time of one kind or other in their warmer months. In that case the conversion factor changes because UTC does NOT use any kind of savings time. It's the same the whole year round. So here in the USA Eastern Zone, the factor is 5 for Standard time, but becomes 4 during Daylight Savings time.

Probably the easiest thing to do is to purchase a 24 hour digital clock for the shack and set it to UTC time. I've had such a setup in my shack for many years and it makes logging the correct time a snap for paper logging. Of course if you computer log in the shack, just set the logging program to UTC and you're all set.

I think that covers it pretty well, but if you need more info including your specific conversion factor, a Bing search on the Internet will probably turn up any additional info you may need. You may also refer to Art's item in newsletter issue #146.

4a. NAQCC QRS NETS:

News and net reports in this section are from QRS Net Manager Dan AF4LB unless otherwise credited.
Dan will handle all Net related material at this email address:
pix email af4lb

Attention all QRS NET lovers! The NQN NET on August 14th, and the ECN NET on August 18th will be held from a different location. I am going portable at an elevation of about 800 feet in the mountains of western Virginia. I will still be using my K2 but my antenna will be a random verticle wire in the trees and not my g5rv. I look forward to hearing my regulars as well as making some new friends. See you there! 73 Dan af4lb

Now our NAQCC QRS Nets schedule and activity report:

NAQCC QRS Net

Sunday evenings local time which is Monday 0000Z on 7041 kHz.

Date(UTC)	NCS	Participants
8-1-11	AF4LB - 12-	AF4LB W4NA N8IUP WX4RM K4UFT K3WWP N9RLO N4JD K1IEE KD8HES KR9Z KF4IBU

NAQCC ET QRS Net (East Texas)

Monday evenings local time, which is Tuesday 0000Z on 7121 kHz.

Date(UTC)	NCS	Participants
8-2-11	KA5TJS -5-	KA5TJS KE5YUM KE5YGA W5IQS KF4IBU

NAQCC EC QRS Net (East Coast)

Thursday evenings local time which is Friday 0130Z on 7041 kHz.

Date(UTC)	NCS	Participants
8-5-11	AF4LB -4-	AF4LB KD8HES W4NA KE3HL

NAQCC PNW QRS Net (Pacific NorthWest)

Thursday evenings local time which is Friday 0200Z on 3574 kHz.

Date(UTC)	NCS	Participants

All frequencies are +/- QRM.

For more net info, see CW Assistance/QRS Nets on the web site.

5. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH:

Let's take a comedy and/or nostalgia break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT NAQCC #2062. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist. Dick's cartoons appear monthly in the K9YA Telegraph, a free ham radio eZine, where he is staff cartoonist. The NAQCC is very honored to reprint Dick's cartoons originally published in the K9YA Telegraph. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site. A new cartoon

has appeared in each of our even-numbered newsletters ever since their debut in Issue #058, November 17, 2007.

6. MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

This section is managed by Paul N8XMS and any questions about it should go to PAUL142857@GMAIL.COM. Paul selects members at random and asks them if they would like to be featured in the Member Spotlight in the newsletter.

Red Thompson W3RT #2545

My first introduction to Ham Radio came back in the mid 1950's in Long Island NY where Joe-K2OWW, and Ed (call sign unknown) had talked about it and showed me some of those mysterious boxes that glowed in the night!

My service in the US Navy kept me below decks in the Engine room and boiler rooms of some Service Fleet vessels, and one Destroyer. Shipmate friends of mine invited me up to the Radio Shack, where I observed message handling and some Navy Mars operations. Still...the radio bug hadn't really taken hold of me yet. Too many boilers and turbines to operate and repair!

One of my ships, the USS Wyandot (KA-92) took me to Little America and McMurdo Sound in the Antarctic, where we took part in International Geophysical Year/ Deep Freeze IV. (My ship brought Admiral Byrd's DC-3 back to go in the Smithsonian).

After my Navy service, I operated stationary steam plants and have continued to do so to this day. I am retired from one outfit but still work 40 plus a week, to help pay for some of these great hobbies that I have!

My Elmer, Tim Cushman (KB3ZS) administered the Novice exam to me in 1978. My call was WB3LNZ. I upgraded to General in 1979 and packed my station and went to my brother-in-laws mountain home in Central PA and operated November SS-CW with a wire dipole and a tuner on my TS 520s and the Nye-Viking Straight Key. Kinda bitten by the CW experience, I had quiet a lot of fun and continue to do so today with CW. I am not a super-high speed operator, but am very comfortable up to 20 or 25 WPM; preferring QRS qso's. I upgraded to Extra Class in 1995.

I enjoy contesting, participating in the PA QSO Party and November SS-CW. Still haven't done a "Sweep" yet...but hopeful that I will someday!

Currently, the W3RT station consists of a Kenwood TS-940 SAT (which I operate at qrp levels) going to either a sloper which is strung from the 25' level of my nested tower, or a Force 12 C3SS beam. I also have an Oak Hills Research 20/40 that I haven't put on the air yet. My key line-up has 2 'bugs- a 1970 Lightning, and a more recent "Annie" from Vibroplex, along with 8 or 9 straight keys, and 2 paddles. I like to change straight keys in mid-qso, but have found that some of the straight keys aren't equipped with a "spell-checker" which leads to some interesting spelling repeat requests!

I have memberships in NAQCC (2545), FISTS (13948), SKCC (3237T), SOC (838) WARC (394) and QCWA (31979). I support all CW activity and Ham Radio in general.

73, Red Thompson, W3RT

7. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS:

This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. Deadline for submitting news items for the next newsletter is August 25. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window. DISCLAIMER: Any views expressed in this section are those of the member submitting them, and may or may not be those of the NAQCC or its officers.

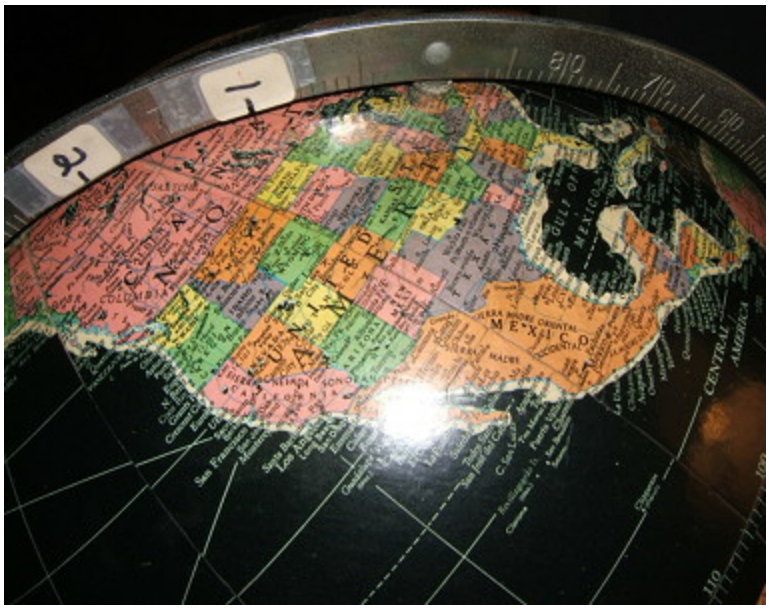
- **From John K3WWP #0002 -** I've found time to update the number of 1000 MPW QSO's I've made for our KMPW Honor Roll listing. I've done it in an easy and quick way that you can use also that enabled me to find 849 such QSO's in a very short time. All you need is a great circle map centered on your location or a modified globe in which you replace the North and South pole axis with a new axis through your location and the antipode point. See here for an easy way to find the antipode for your QTH. Then you mark the map or the globe with a 5,000 mile distance circle from your QTH. Now any QSO with a country COMPLETELY outside that circle is automatically a 1,000 MPW QSO if you used 5 watts or less. You can do the same for say 1,000 miles and 1 watt of power or any other miles/power combination. When you get to the shorter distances and lower powers the circle may pass through the USA and Canada. At that point you can use states and provinces to determine your 1,000 MPW QSO's. The only tricky part comes when a country, state, or province is bisected by one of your lines. In that case, you'll have to figure those QSO's manually, either by using the distances in QRZ.com or some other means. Beware of QRZ though. In some cases the distance listed is not to the specific station QTH, but to a generic point somewhere near the center of the country.

I hope that info will help you earn our KMPW award and/or improve your KMPW Honor Roll listing. Any questions on anything that might not be clear, email me and ask.

Here are two pictures showing my modified globe. The left picture shows (at the rivet) the new axis being on Kittanning, PA and the 1(000) mile and 2(000) mile distance markers on the mounting ring. If the mounting ring is marked off in degrees as mine is, it's easy to figure where to put the distance markers. Dividing 360 degrees by the Earth's circumference of 24,900 miles gives very close to .0145 degrees per mile, then multiplying by 1,000 gives 14.5 degrees for 1000 miles. So make a mark every 14.5 degrees for the 1,000 mile markers.

The right hand picture shows clearly that all of Japan is outside the 5,000 mile distance

marker, so all 173 QSO's I've made with Japan using 5 watts IS a 1,000+ MPW QSO. It likewise shows Asiatic Russia split by the 5,000 mile distance marker which means I had (have) to check each one of my 126 QRP QSO's with that country by another method to determine whether or not it is a 1,000 MPW QSO - Whew!



As a side benefit of modifying a globe in this manner, you can see exactly the path your signal takes between you and the station you work. Just align the mounting ring on the station's location, and you can instantly see both the normal short path and the rarer long path. That may help to explain why some areas of the world are easy to work while others are very difficult. Of course there are rare times when signals don't take exact great circle paths, but this will work for the vast majority of cases.

Club email address - **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET**

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.